

AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION:

Replace paragraph [0012] with the following amended paragraph:

[0012] To achieve the above objects of the present invention in one aspect provides a customer information management system including: a first acquisition block obtaining image information of a customer having purchased an item; an attribute determination block determining a first attribute of the customer from the image information obtained, a second acquisition block obtaining data of the item purchased by the customer; and a recording block recording the data of the item obtained and the first attribute of the customer determined, the data and the first attribute being correlated with each other. As used herein, the term "block" is used to mean a hardware or software module. Further, as used herein, the term "correlate", past or present tense, is used to mean link or associate, and is not used to imply the use of statistical correlation.

Replace paragraph [0013] with the following amended paragraph:

[0013] In the present invention image information of a customer purchasing an item is used to determine an attribute of the customer. This can alleviate ~~an~~ (lessen or remove) the operation of manually entering information of the attribute of the customer. Furthermore the attribute can be determined free of variation as it is determined by referring to a uniform reference provided by image information. The attribute of the customer thus determined and data of an item purchased by the customer are correlated with each other and thus recorded.

Replace paragraph [0022] with the following amended paragraph:

[0022] In the present invention image information of a customer purchasing an item is used to determine an attribute of the customer. This can alleviate (lessen or remove) the an operation of manually entering information of the attribute of the customer. Furthermore, the attribute can be determined free of variation as it is determined by referring to a uniform reference provided by image information. The attribute of the customer thus determined and data of an item purchased by the customer are correlated with each other and thus recorded.

Replace paragraph [0036] with the following amended paragraph:

[0036] In the present invention, extracted image information is used to determine an attribute of a potential customer or shopper (a non-purchaser). The potential customer's attribute is automatically determined to alleviate an attribute entry operation imposed for example on a clerk. Furthermore the image information serves as a uniform reference for determining the attribute so as to determine the same free of variation.

Replace paragraph [0045] with the following amended paragraph:

[0045] In the present invention, image information is obtained in the step of obtaining image information of a customer entering a shop and image information is also obtained in the step of obtaining image information of a customer having purchased an item and the image information thus obtained is referred to ~~to~~ as extract image information obtained exclusively in the step of obtaining image information of a customer entering a shop. Thus, image information of a customer leaving a shop without purchasing an item, is extracted. The customer

corresponding to the extracted image information is correlated with information indicative of a non-purchaser and an attribute and thus recorded.

Replace paragraph [0048] with the following amended paragraph:

[0048] In the present invention, extracted image information is used to determine an attribute of a potential customer or shopper (a non-purchaser). The potential customer's attribute is automatically determined to alleviate an attribute entry operation imposed for example on a clerk. Furthermore the image information serves as a uniform reference for determining the attribute so as to determine the same free of variation.

Replace paragraph [0058] with the following amended paragraph:

[0058] Furthermore the present invention in still another aspect provides a customer information management system including: a recording block recording image information of a customer of a shop and a frequency, i.e., number, of the customer's appearance in the shop, the image information and the frequency being correlated with each other; an acquisition block obtaining image information of a customer entering the shop; a comparison block comparing the image information recorded in the recording block and the image information obtained with each other to determine whether the image information match each other; an increment block incrementing by one a frequency of appearance in the shop recorded and corresponding to the image information recorded in the recording block and matching the image information obtained; and an addition block adding to the recording block the image information obtained, if a comparison made by the

comparison block reveals that the recording block does not have image information matching the image information obtained. As used herein, the term "frequency" refers to a number of times a customer/shopper has appeared in a shop.

Replace paragraph [0093] with the following amended paragraph:

[0093] Preferably the attribute of the customer includes sex, i.e., gender, or age. Recording sex or age as an attribute allows an item marketing strategy to be developed with sex or age taken into account. As used herein, the term "sex" refers to gender.